

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 PM-03 INT-05 COME-00 EB-07

TRSE-00 FRB-03 OMB-01 CIEP-01 GSA-01 L-03 H-02 FEAE-00

AF-06 EA-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 CU-02 AID-05 /095 W

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R 161715Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1356

INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE GEORGETOWN 0910

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, VE, GY

SUBJECT: WRAP-UP OF VENEZUELAN FOREIGN IMINISTER'S VISIT TO GUYANA

REF: GEORGETOWN 883

1. VENEZUELAN FONMIN RAMON ESCOVAR SALOM AND ENTOURAGE OF ABOUT A DOZEN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THREE MILITARY (AIRCRAFT CREW) SPENT THREE DAYS IN GUYANA. MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF VISIT WERE FONMIN'S TRIP TO KAITEUR FALLS WHICH IS IN DISPUTED ESSEQUIBO TERRITORY; ANNOUNCEMENT OF BURNHAM'S PLAN TO VISIT VENEZUELA AND MEET PEREZ IN LATE JULY (REFTEL); AND ANNOUNCEMENT THAT VENEZUELA WILL PURCHASE BAUXITE AND ALUMINA FROM GUYANA.

2. ON BAUXITE TRADE, NEITHER GOG NOR VENEZUELAN'S MADE ANYMENTION OF EXCHANGING BAUXITE FOR OIL. GOG PROBABLY KEENLY INTERESTED IN SELLING METAL GRADE TO VENEZUELA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN VIEW OF DECREASED DEMAND FOR PRODUCT FROM TRADITIONAL BUYERS. IN PRESS CONFERENCE HELD ON DAY OF HIS DEPARTURE, ESCOVAR GAVE IMPRESSION

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THAT GOG AND VENEZUELA ARE NEAR AGREEMENT ON SOME PURCHASING

ARRANGEMENT FOR BAUXITE AND ALUMINA.

3. ESCOVAR IN PRESS CONFERENCE ALSO INDICATED DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN GOING ON CONCERNING POSSIBLE JOINT VENTURE CEMENT PLANT. (THIS WE FIND STRANGE SINCE BARBADOS/GUYANA CEMENT PLANT IS FIRMLY ON TRACK).

4. ESCOVAR REFERRED TO PEREZ INVITATION TO BURNHAM. FONMIN RAMPHAL TOLD DCM PRIVATELY THAT VENUE OF MEETING IS NOW LA ORCHILLA ISLAND, NOT RPT MARGARITA ISLAND WHICH RAMPHAL HAD EARLIER SAID WAS PROBABLE SITE. RAMPHAL ADVISED DCM THAT HE WAS TOLD MARGARITA WAS TOO FULL OF TOURISTS.

5. ESCOVAR TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO DEFEND OPEC OIL PRICE HIKES USING USUAL OPEC RHETORIC. HE ALSO DENIED THAT VENEZUELA HAD ANY COLONIALIST INTENTIONS IN THE CARIBBEAN, AND FOLLOWED WITH COMMENT THAT VENEZUELA WOULD LIKE TO JOIN CARICOM. FINALLY HE DODGED BORDER DISPUTE BY SIMPLY SAYING HIS VISIT WAS FOR ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL PURPOSES.

6.) COMMENT: VENEZUELANS FROM ESCOVAR ON DOWN TO EMBASSY FIRST SECRETARY WERE CLOSE-MOUTHED ABOUT VISIT'S PURPOSES. AT SOCIAL RECEPTION HOSTED BY VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR, EMBOFF ASKED VENEZUELAN OFFICIAL OF POSSIBILITY EXTENSION OF VENEZUELA'S LOAN TO GUYANA AND GOT CHANGE-OF-SUBJECT RESPONSE. VENEZUELANS SEEMED UNDER ORDERS TO BE UNCOMMUNICATIVE WITH USG ON SUCH SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS.

7. MOST CURIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT WAS VENEZUELANS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN JOINING OR BEING ASSOCIATED WITH CARICOM. EMBASSY WONDERS WHETHER THIS WAS PICKED UP IN TRINIDAD PRESS, AND IF SO WHETHER PM WILLIAMS MAY NOT SEIZE UPON IT AS FURTHER EXAMPLE OF VENEZUELA'S ALLEGED HEGEMONIST DESIGNS. END COMMENT
KREBS

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Message Attributes

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